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Beverly Eaves Perdue
Governor

July 2010

Volume 24 Number 3

Dee Freeman
Secretary, DENR

MAYO RIVER STATE PARK OPENS

North Carolina's 35th state park opened to the public April 1 as interim facilities were completed at Mayo River State Park near Mayodan in Rockingham County.

The restoration of a pavilion-style picnic shelter designed by renowned architect Antonin Raymond is the centerpiece of the project that also includes picnic grounds, play fields, a hiking trail and a ranger contact station.

The park was authorized by the N.C. General Assembly in 2003 and now encompasses 1,961 acres at several sites along the Mayo River.

"The development of North Carolina's 35th state park has truly been a result of close partnership with the community, and the state parks system is very proud to share this achievement with Rockingham County and its citizens," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director. "Mayo River State Park will grow in its conservation mission and its ability to offer exciting outdoor recreation."

The interim facilities are on a 398-acre site just north of Mayodan known locally as Mayo Park. The site was developed in 1948 by Washington Mills as a community recreation park. The state parks system acquired the property in 2004 from Avalon Development Corp.

Land acquisition for the state park contin-

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N.C. REP. NELSON COLE SPOKE AT THE CEREMONIES INSIDE THE RENOVATED PICNIC SHELTER.

BLENDING PAST, FUTURE

For its friends and neighbors, the new Mayo River State Park is already a curious blend of what it once was and keen anticipation on what it will become.

Interim park facilities opened to the public in April are on property locally called the "Old Mayo Park," a mill-built recreation area where residents played on swings and learned to swim as youngsters.

Many of them returned June 5 for an open house to celebrate the modest beginnings of a state park that now encompasses 1,961 acres

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FORT MACON FACILITY GRABS THE GOLD

The new Fort Macon State Park Coastal Education and Visitor Center has earned a gold rating in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program of the U.S. Building Council.

The Fort Macon facility is the first non-university, state-owned building to earn the distinction. The certification program has become an industry standard for environmentally sensi-

tive construction in both the public and private sectors.

The 22,547-square-foot education and visitor center at North Carolina's second-oldest state park was dedicated in October and is devoted to environmental education about the state's fragile coastal ecology, offering 4,000 square feet of exhibit space, a teaching auditorium and classrooms.

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Department of Environment and Natural Resources

HAMMOCKS BEACH GOES 'TRASH-FREE'

To further protect ecologically sensitive Bear Island, Hammocks Beach State Park designated the island as a "trash-free" zone in May.

Trash receptacles were removed from the 892-acre barrier island and visitors are being asked to carry refuse back to collection points near

the park's visitor center on the mainland.

The program began as the park resumed regular seasonal ferry service to Bear Island. The ferry service had been delayed for about a week due to a beach access repaving project.

"Bear Island is one of

the few remaining pristine barrier islands in North Carolina, and we all share a responsibility to protect this rare gem," Park Superintendent Paul Donnelly said. "The 'trash-free' program will help us all be more aware of our effect on the island environment and help instill a 'leave-no-trace' ethic."

Visitation at Hammocks Beach State Park in Onslow County has more than doubled in the past 14 years to more than 100,000 people annually. Most of the visitors take the brief ferry ride to the three-mile-long island with its unspoiled beach, bathhouse, extensive dune fields and back-pack camping sites.

The idea for the project originated with Ranger Jacob Vitek as part of his environmental education certification.

Vitek arranged for free, biodegradable collection bags to be made available for visitors at several points on the island. Rangers and ferry operations explain the program on the ride to the island, and informational signs were designed. Park staff at the bathhouse and concession area will also take steps to reduce the amount of trash generated.

The park expects to gradually reduce the cost of commercial trash collection by as much as 50 percent, and give park staff more time for other duties.

The program appears to be successful. The park has been moderately busy on the weekends and we have already seen a reduction in the amount of trash in the park," Vitek said. "The staff has received mostly

From The Director's Desk

It's always exciting to announce a new state park. We've had the opportunity six times in the past seven years – at Chimney Rock, Grandfather Mountain, Haw River, Mayo River, Elk Knob and Dismal Swamp – and it's always the culmination of much hard work by our state parks staff and our partners.

But there's not too much time for celebration. Such an announcement is also the starting gun for much more intense work by everyone involved, and that's reflected in a number of stories in *The Steward* this time around. Mayo River State Park, authorized in 2003, opened to the public with interim facilities. We've always made an effort to get the public onto new state parks as quickly as possible. Citizens can begin to enjoy their investment and begin to share the exciting vision of a new state park. But, it takes much coordination among our land acquisition, natural resource management, planning, and design and development staff. And, a superintendent, rangers and staff to operate the park must be put into place.

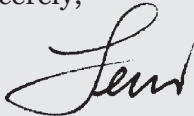
At Chimney Rock, a master plan that will guide development for at least 20 years is being fashioned. It's a very complex job that involves every component of the state parks system. And, it involves the public. Their ideas are important and the process gives our future visitors a bigger stake in the outcome.

Carvers Creek State Park in Cumberland County is in the very early stages, with property still being acquired, and a master plan there is being prepared as well.

At this point in time, we have state parks in virtually every stage of development. And, it's worth noting that our second-oldest state park established in 1924 at Fort Macon recently opened a new coastal education and visitor center, and we received confirmation that it earned a gold rating by the U.S. Green Building Council for sustainable features. Our staff is installing state-of-the-art exhibits there. Jockey's Ridge State Park just completed the installation of a wind turbine that will generate electric power and cut utility bills. There are new ideas even in older parks.

We note with pride the date when a new state park is launched. But no state park is ever really completed.

Sincerely,



Lewis Ledford

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THE WIND TURBINE AT JOCKEY'S RIDGE STATE PARK IS JUST A FEW YARDS FROM THE VISITOR CENTER AND IS BARELY VISIBLE FROM THE 80-FOOT-HIGH DUNE SEVERAL HUNDRED YARDS AWAY.



WIND WILL POWER JOCKEY'S RIDGE

The wind that has shaped the sands at Jockey's Ridge State Park for centuries will now supply electric power to the park through a 60-foot-high wind turbine erected near the visitor center.

The wind turbine with three blades is 23 feet in diameter and is positioned on a single pole near the visitor center and several hundred yards from the 80-foot-high dune that gives the park in Dare County its name.

Construction of the turbine was completed in late May and park officials anticipated approval to begin generating electricity in June.

"Part of our mission in the state parks system is to exemplify good stewardship and explore sustainable ways of operating and helping people enjoy the natural resources," Park Superintendent Debo Cox said. "The wind turbine will help us cut costs, and it will also serve as a working educational exhibit for visitors."

The turbine is low-profile and barely visible from the top of the principal dune.

It becomes the second such turbine erected in the vicinity. A local restaurant employs a similar system, and the state-owned Jeanette's Pier has one under construction.

Exactly how much power the turbine will produce is not known, but it has been connected to the power grid via Dominion North Carolina Power. Park officials anticipate its power generation will offset most of the cost of supplying the visitor center, which includes an exhibit hall, an auditorium and park offices.

Park staff worked with Nag's Head to secure permits and also conducted early studies with a mobile lift to try to determine any negative visual impact the turbine might have.

The staff and biologists with the state parks system also conducted a year-long study



THE TURBINE IS 23 FEET IN DIAMETER AND MOUNTED ON A LOW-PROFILE, SINGLE POLE.

to ensure the turbine would not have any negative impact on coastal or migratory birds. The monopole-style structure, which doesn't require guy wires, was chosen to reduce effects on birds in flight.

The turbine was manufactured by Bergey Windpower Inc. The cost of the project was \$140,000, which includes outdoor exhibits that explain its operation to park visitors. The project was supported by the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the principal funding source for state parks capital improvements and land acquisition.

MASTER PLAN

THE WORKSHOP FORMAT INVITED VISITORS TO WRITE COMMENTS DIRECTLY ONTO AN ARRAY OF DESIGN MAPS.



CHIMNEY ROCK PONDERING ITS FUTURE

Excitement, curiosity and even some apprehension mixed in the atmosphere during a day-long public planning session in May for a Chimney Rock State Park master plan.

Nearly 200 people, most of them from the Hickory Nut Gorge area, studied an array of maps representing three distinctly different visions for one of North Carolina's newest, high-profile state parks.

Those visions covered a broad spectrum, ranging from low-impact and conservation-based to one proposing intensive recreation development across the more than 4,300 acres devoted to the state park thus far.

Comments from the public were scribbled onto copies of the maps and written onto survey sheets, all collected by planners with Greenways

Inc., a Durham-based environmental planning and landscape architecture firm responsible for completing the plan this year.

Online survey sheets were also made available at Greenways' website through most of June.

Chuck Flink, Greenways president and project manager, described the most intense, high-impact recreation plan as a "Disney plan with everything but the kitchen sink, just to say we explored some of these ideas."

It's highly likely the final master plan proposal will be a hybrid that sifts the best ideas from all three versions, Flink said.

The public session was highly anticipated in the four counties – Rutherford, Polk, Henderson and Buncombe – where the park's property is spread. The region is highly dependent on retirement income and tourism surrounding Lake Lure and the former Chimney Rock Park, which was absorbed into the state park in 2007.

Chimney Rock's is one of three new park master plans in the works this year (along with Haw River and Carvers Creek) and by far the most complex. Much of the park property is cheek-by-jowl with the town of Lake Lure and the village of Chimney Rock as well as new mountain subdivisions.

Much of the terrain is rugged to the point of sheer rock faces, and is home to an array of rare species and habitats. And, many parcels are not contiguous.

All of those factors severely limit the amount of property suitable for park development.



CHUCK FLINK OF GREENWAYS INC. WALKS VISITORS THROUGH ONE OF THREE PROPOSED CONCEPTS.

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CHIMNEY ROCK

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People who came to the public planning session generally fell into three categories. Business communities in the towns were well represented with entrepreneurs eager to learn how park traffic flows and facilities would affect shoppers.

Homeowners near park properties were concerned about increased traffic and security. And, recreational interest groups were there to lobby for mountain bike trails and climbing access.

Many of the people attending asked about the time frame for development and whether funds are available. State parks officials explained the process of prioritizing capital projects and details about the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the principal source for funding new projects and land acquisition.

During the day, visitors were left to examine the proposed plans at their leisure and ask questions of planners.

In short presentations during the day, Flink explained that Greenways is trying to develop a “100-year vision for the park” as well as a 20-year plan and a five-year action plan.

All three development scenarios include continued infrastructure improvements at the developed Chimney Rock access, and call for existing bushwhacked trails and old logging roads to be reverted to natural areas in most cases.

The “conservation-focused” alternative considers protection of eight significant natural heritage areas to be paramount with limited public access. It includes about 10 miles of hiking trails, two new day use areas, and a visitor center

near Lake Lure, but otherwise, very little development outside of the existing Chimney Rock access.

The “low impact recreation” alternative proposes using only previously disturbed areas for future park development. A visitor center at “the Meadows” at Chimney Rock’s lower elevation would be served by the existing entrance and a new road leading to the town of Lake Lure. This

area would be a recreational hiking hub opening to an extensive network of trails and backcountry camping options on the gorge’s south side.

There would be three separate day use areas leading to mountain biking, climbing and additional hiking trails, with two of these on the gorge’s north side.

The “intensive recreation and use” plan calls for a visitor

center on the summit of Chimney Rock Mountain above the developed area, in an abandoned 25-acre orchard. It would be a hub for backcountry and tent/trailer camping, picnicking and hiking. There would be five day use areas scattered on both the north and south sides of the gorge with access to camping, mountain biking, climbing, equestrian and hiking opportunities.

The Rumbling Bald Mountain access area – property now under the protection of The Nature Conservancy – would be the site for a secondary visitor center and satellite park administrative offices.

The biggest drawback to this plan is access to the visitor center site at the orchard, dependent on a main park access either far to the west and away from normal traffic flows in Chimney Rock and Lake Lure, or a new and very expensive road traversing the park’s eastern interior.



A GROUP FROM THE TOWN OF LAKE LURE LISTENS AS FLINK DESCRIBES RESTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT PRESENTED BY THE RUGGED TERRAIN AND RARE HABITATS OF THE HICKORY NUT GORGE.

THOMPSON TO LEAD HAW RIVER PARK

Kelley Thompson, a veteran state park superintendent and ranger, has been chosen as the superintendent of Haw River State Park in Guilford and Rockingham counties. She succeeds Susan McBean, who became superintendent of Grandfather Mountain State Park earlier this year.

A superintendent is the chief of operations and administration at a state park or state recreation area with wide-ranging responsibilities for staffing, training, law enforcement, visitor services, natural resource protection and environmental education.



At the new Haw River State Park, Thompson will be responsible for operation of the state parks system's first residential environmental education center and for managing the development of traditional state park facilities guided by a new master plan.

A native of Knoxville, TN, Thompson was raised in Chapel Hill and graduated in 1990 from Western Carolina University with a bachelor's degree in natural resource management.

She joined the state parks system in 1994

as a ranger at Jockey's Ridge State Park and later served at Jones Lake State Park as a senior ranger in charge of interpretive and education programming. She was promoted to superintendent at Goose Creek State Park in December 2004.

Thompson is a certified environmental educator, a CPR instructor and holds advanced law enforcement certification.

"Kelley provided outstanding guidance and innovation at our first environmental education center at Goose Creek and she brings that experience and enthusiasm to Haw River State Park, where environmental education is a central component of the park's mission," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director.

"Her skills in leadership and community relations will also serve us well as the park continues to develop."

Thompson said, "Sue McBean has done such a fantastic job in getting Haw River set up as a state park, it's been easy to step into her shoes and to continue her vision. With the new master plan in the final stages, I'm excited about working on the next stages of Haw River's development."

Haw River State Park was authorized by the N.C. General Assembly in 2003 and now encompasses 1,334 acres including the campus of the environmental education center.

JOCKEY'S RIDGE GIVEN PELICAN AWARD

Jockey's Ridge State Park was presented a 2009 Pelican Award from the N.C. Coastal Federation for its volunteer programs to rebuild oyster reefs and stabilize shorelines.

The awards recognize exemplary achievements and actions by citizens, legislators, government officials and community groups in protecting and restoring coastal resources. They were presented during a luncheon and ceremony in May.

The state park staff was honored for its long hours spent organizing the projects, with special commendation for rangers Ann Wunderly and Justin Barnes.

The environmental organization noted, "Moving 2,000 bushes of oyster shells would be a chore any day. But getting all that shell into net bags, moving it over the dunes to the shore of Roanoke Sound and stacking it into a 425-foot-long sill took an unusual amount of coordination,

not to mention elbow grease."

At several locations in coastal state parks, recycled oyster shells are placed into net bags and stacked to form sills to which new, growing oysters can attach themselves.

The resulting reefs provide habitat for a variety of marine life, and the new oysters help improve water quality.

The park staff also helped with a Valentine's Day oyster roast and shell-bagging event sponsored by Friends of Jockey's Ridge and organized students and adult volunteers to plant marsh grasses behind the sill.

Park Superintendent Debo Cox said, "We take it as a real validation of the hard work that goes on here every day to not only serve our visitors and make sure they have a safe and enjoyable experience, but also to serve all parts of our mission by protecting and preserving this natural resource."

CHIMNEY ROCK GIVEN ‘BEST IDEAS’ GRANT

Dr. Carolyn Ward, president of the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, announced that Chimney Rock State Park received a Tier 2 Grant from the National Park Foundation’s America’s Best Idea Grants Program.

The grant is being used to help improve new TRACK trails at the park to motivate kids to use trail systems everywhere.

The TRACK Trail program is part of the larger Kids in Parks Initiative sponsored by the foundation, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation.

The mission of the effort is to increase physical activity of children and their families, to improve

nutritional choices and to get kids outdoors.

The state park launched its effort on National Trails Day June 5, offering kids free admission and guided hikes on its Great Woodland Adventure Trail designed specifically for young hikers.

The TRACK program is superimposed on existing trail systems. Kids get “prizes” for participation when they register on the website www.kidsinparks.com and are motivated to experience other trails.

Funding for the projects was inspired by the epic Ken Burns documentary *The National Parks: American’s Best Idea*.

PARKS DIRECTOR RECOGNIZED BY NCSU

Lewis R. Ledford, director of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, was recognized in May with the 2009-10 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management at North Carolina State University.

The award recognizes outstanding contributions to the parks, recreation, tourism, sport or golf professions at the state, national or international level and is reserved for practicing professionals with at least 20 years service.

Ledford joined the state parks system in 1976 and was named director in 2004. He is the first director to rise from an entry-level ranger position to lead the system. Having begun his career at William B. Umstead State Park, he served as superintendent at Mount Mitchell State Park for five years and as west district superintendent for 16 years before being named superintendent of state parks in 2000.

The award sponsors noted that through-

out his career, Ledford has been instrumental in developing important partnerships with public and private organizations.

“Lewis has provided outstanding leadership and direction for the agency, spearheaded unprecedented park creation and acquisition initiatives and been an unrelenting advocate for more equitable compensation for ranger and maintenance staff.”

Since 2003, the system has added almost 37,000 acres and the N.C. General Assembly has established five new state parks, a state trail and six state natural areas.

In 2007, Ledford was honored with the William Penn Mott Jr. Award for Excellence by the National Recreation and Park Association.

He serves on the boards of directors of the National Association of State Park Directors, the National Recreation and Parks Association, NASORLO and the North Carolina Park and Recreation Association.

HAMMOCKS BEACH

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positive comments on the change and very few negative ones.”

A similar program was successfully launched on a portion of beach at Fort Fisher State Recreation Area in 2007.

At both parks, visitors can help in the effort by planning to reduce the amount of disposable items they carry, and if possible, by bringing re-usable containers and bags to carry out trash and recyclable items.



PROJECT AIMS TO KEEP BEAR ISLAND BEACHES PRISTINE.

MAYO RIVER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ues within a 12-mile river corridor from Mayodan north to the Virginia state line. The state parks system owns about 400 acres contiguous to the state line, which could be developed as a second principal park access.

The park has a permanent staff of four and two seasonal employees under the direction of Park Superintendent Fred Watkins. Adrienne Wallace served as the park's first superintendent before taking the leadership post at Chimney Rock State Park.

The former Mayo Park site included the picnic pavil-

ion, a cooking shelter and a bathhouse designed by Raymond, a protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright who introduced a Japanese style of architecture to the U.S. incorporating natural materials.

The pavilion and cooking shelter have been fully restored in wood and natural stone. The bathhouse was deemed too dilapidated for restoration, although portions of the structure were salvaged for potential later use as exhibits.

The site also includes two small ponds, one of which has been drained to allow dam renovation.

Five individual picnic sites have been installed and a half-mile hiking trail is in place. Volunteers and park staff are building another 1.8-mile trail.

The initial development project also includes renovation of a former caretaker's quarters as a ranger station, a restroom building designed in a style to reflect Raymond's and park infrastructure including entrance road, parking areas and utilities.

The \$1.7 million project was supported by the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the principal funding source for state park land acquisition and capital projects.

PAST, FUTURE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

along the Mayo River. And, many were impressed that the park area and the restored, historic picnic shelter – to some degree – looked as it did decades ago.

"People in this valley love this river and want to keep it the way it was. The way it is, is the way it was for the most part," said Lindley Butler, of the Dan River Basin Association.

"That's what state parks are all about," Butler said.

Butler, his family and the association were instrumental in early efforts for the N.C. General Assembly to authorize the state park in 2003, a necessary step before land could be acquired.

Aside from natural resource protection, the state park brings a new economy for Rockingham County based on nature and tourism, he said, "and based partly on resources that cannot be exported...that simply cannot be taken overseas."



PICNIC SHELTER SERVES AS A FOCAL POINT FOR THE NEW STATE PARK.

N.C. Rep. Nelson Cole, another early proponent of the state park, said, "We don't always think about the economic engine it creates for our county."

Cole said preservation of resources and economic growth go hand in hand. "We have to do this throughout the state because who knows that the state will be like in 500 years."

Lewis Ledford, state parks director, acknowledged to the group that area residents were wary of the state park idea when it was first proposed. Community leaders hustled to gather more than 20 resolutions backing the state parks system's plans.

"Never before have I seen such an outpouring of support in the local community for a new park," Ledford said.

MILLPOND VISITOR CENTER GETS AWARD

Merchants Millpond State Park in Gates County was recently presented the first Albemarle Stewardship Program Outstanding Stewardship Award for its new visitor center built to standards of the U.S. Green Building Council.

Features of the 9,500-square-foot building include geothermal heating and cooling, passive solar design, rainwater collection and broad use of recycled materials.

The visitor center will likely be certified under the building council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

The award was presented to Park Superintendent Jay Greenwood by Marshall Stevenson, chairman of the Albemarle Resource Con-

servation and Development Council.

East District Superintendent Adrian O'Neal was also recognized by the council for his support of LEED certified construction projects. A coastal education and visitor center at Fort Macon State Park, also built to LEED standards, was opened to the public at about the same time as the Merchants Millpond project.

The LEED green building rating system and certification standards were developed in 1998 to promote design and construction practices that are sustainable.

The designer of the visitor center was Frank Harmon, Architect, of Raleigh and general contractor was SEVAC Corp. of Portsmouth, Va.

FORT MACON

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Museum-quality exhibits are being prepared for installation in the exhibit hall later this year.

"An important part of the mission of state parks is to exemplify good stewardship of our natural resources and the Fort Macon facility serves that mission well," said Lewis Ledford, state parks director.

"The LEED gold rating exceeds our mandate to make all new state park buildings energy efficient, and it's the result of extraordinary effort by the building's designer, the contractors and the park staff."

The brick-and-block facility was designed by Hobbs Architecture of Pittsboro, and general contractor was Daniels & Daniels Construction Co. of Goldsboro. The state parks system's construction manager for the visitor center project was Glenn Sheppard.

The center also serves as a gateway to the 183-year-old fortress, and its architectural style echoes that attraction's 19th century military features.

Funding for the proj-



THE COASTAL EDUCATION AND VISITOR CENTER MAKES USE OF STRONG NATURAL LIGHT AS WELL AS LOW-ENERGY LIGHTING FIXTURES.

ect came from the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and construction began in April 2008.

Sustainable features that contributed to the gold rating include a sophisticated rainwater collection system and stormwater runoff controls, low-energy lighting, water-saving fixtures and preferred parking for fuel-efficient vehicles. Also, several tons of concrete construction debris was collected to contribute to an

artificial, offshore reef, an idea that originated with the ranger staff.

Three other visitor centers, at Raven Rock, Merchants Millpond and Cliffs of the Neuse state parks, are also built to LEED standards but have not yet been rated, a process that often takes several months upon completion.

The Fort Macon center is similar in function to visitor centers built at 20 state parks

DUGOUT CANOE RAISED AT WACCAMAW

By Chris Helms, Superintendent
Lake Waccamaw State Park

When Margaret McDowell called the Lake Waccamaw State Park office May 24, she knew what she had found two days earlier in the lake and she knew that park staff should be informed.

The family has a history in such things. Her husband Danny McDowell and his brother made a similar find 28 years ago; a 20-foot dugout canoe that is now displayed in the Lake Waccamaw Depot Museum.

Margaret McDowell and her daughter, Ashley, had found a remnant piece of a second canoe. Both were fashioned hundreds of years ago by hewing out the burned interior of a log, evidenced by charring that's still visible.

The 13-foot, four-inch canoe section was found near the mouth of Big Creek as the McDowells were on a fishing and clamming trip. According to McDowell, she enjoys clamming while at the coast and while the closest thing she can find in Lake Waccamaw might be a Waccamaw fatmucket or an Asiatic clam, she enjoys going through the motions.

She quickly realized the significance of the discovery but actually found it hard to believe until her husband, with his history of discovery, confirmed that indeed it did look like the one he had found many years before adjacent to the park shoreline near the dam.

Even though the relic was found in knee-deep water, McDowell feared something could happen to it including its possibly being struck by a pass-



VOLUNTEER MATT THOMPSON, LEFT, AND CHRIS SOUTHERLY AND NATHAN HENRY OF THE N.C. OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY UNDERWATER BRANCH EXAMINE THE DUGOUT CANOE.

ing boat. The McDowell family decided to move the canoe to a private pier, owned by a family member along Lake Shore Drive.

Ranger Jonathan Short and I met with Mrs. McDowell a couple of days later, photographed the canoe and confirmed it appeared to be a dugout canoe with its concave shape, charring throughout and well-defined, tapered bow.

The ancient vessel had shifted under the pier and several small pieces had broken off. During the visit and previously by telephone, I stressed to McDowell that the canoe should not have been tampered with or moved, and that several state and federal laws protect such relics.

Sandbags were used to better secure the canoe until a short-term plan could be determined.

We contacted Gene Peacock, east district interpretation and education specialist, for advice due to his archaeological background and recent experience with preserved canoes

used as exhibits at Pettigrew State Park. Gene contacted Nathan Henry, a curator with the N.C. Office of Archaeology's Underwater Branch to arrange a site visit.

Henry and Chris Southerly of the underwater branch and volunteer Matt Thompson went to the site May 28 to help park staff assess and relocate the canoe until a time that it might be raised for preservation and long-term display like the first "McDowell canoe."

Danny McDowell told Henry that he and his brother had towed the earlier find – a 20-foot section – to a takeout point and that his brother rode in the ancient vessel during the tow. Not many folks in our time can claim such a feat.

After taking measurements and photos, Henry secured a small broken portion about nine inches long to take back to the branch lab at Fort Fisher for carbon 14 dating.

The McDowells watched as the canoe was carefully hand-loaded aboard the park's

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SENIOR PROJECT AT GORGES

LUKE HARRIS, LEFT, A SENIOR AT ROSMAN HIGH SCHOOL, INSTALLS A WATER BAR ON A TRAIL AT GORGES STATE PARK UNDER THE EYE OF RANGER JAMES LEDGERWOOD. THE TRAIL WORK, WHICH FAR EXCEEDED THE 18 REQUIRED HOURS, SERVED AS HARRIS' SENIOR PROJECT. A TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY NATIVE, HARRIS PLANS TO ATTEND A LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND HOPES TO WORK IN FORESTRY OR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.



VOTE FOR NC; EARN \$1 FOR TREES

North Carolina state parks are participating in a nationwide effort to plant trees through a novel approach by Odwalla, a western U.S. marketer of nutritional drinks and snacks.

On its website, Odwalla is inviting everyone to vote for a favorite state parks system. Each vote results in one dollar to purchase trees in the state. The program is in its third year, but this is the first year that all 50 states were invited to participate.

In North Carolina, the Odwalla dollars are going to plant longleaf pines, which once covered more than six million acres in the Southeast providing habitat for a number of rare species. Several North Carolina state park units have stands of

longleaf pine, the most notable being Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve.

The website for voting is www.odwalla.com/plantatree. Each person can only vote once.

North Carolina has promoted the contest on Facebook and Twitter and in less than a month collected more than 1,800 votes and remained among the top ten favorites of voters.

Each state was also invited to create a short, creative video which was posted on Odwalla's website.

There is no specific date for the competition to end among the state parks systems, but Odwalla has pledged at least \$200,000 to plant trees throughout the nation.

WACCAMAW CANOE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

work barge for transport to a deeper destination where another dugout had been sunk nearly 10 years ago, after its discovery by a group of teenagers.

At this undisclosed location, the "McDowell Canoe 2" was gently guided down to the muddy bottom and anchored with a sandbag. GPS coordinates were updated, and a metal pole was placed alongside the relic to act as an additional locator.



DIVER CHRIS SOUTHERLY OF THE UNDERWATER BRANCH WITH CANOE.



AT RIGHT, HAW RIVER STATE PARK SUPERINTENDENT KELLEY THOMPSON HANDS OUT CERTIFICATES. ABOVE, CAMPERS WATCH A SLIDE SHOW OF THEIR WEEK'S ACTIVITIES.



JUNIOR RANGERS CAMP AT HAW RIVER

Haw River State Park honored its first graduating class in June. There were no caps and gowns, just t-shirts that boasted, "Junior Ranger."

Forty youngsters in grades 2-7 completed the first-ever junior ranger day camp at the state park's environmental education center.

To earn their coveted badges and certificates, the candidates spent their mornings researching box turtle habits and ranges using sophisticated telemetry gear donated by Recreational Equipment Inc. through Friends of State Parks.

The "citizen research" on box turtles served as a stewardship project for the badges.

Campers created detailed bird's nests and clay turtles in the tradition of true naturalists.

In the afternoons, there was time for canoeing and fishing and good snacks.

"Most of these kids started with us in our

first summer of day camp," said Kathryn Royall, the camp director. "They've come back and brought their friends."

The park originally planned for 24 campers as they redirected the day camp activities to emphasize the junior ranger program, but had so many interested youngsters, it was expanded, Royall said.

The education center staff is devising ways to keep their junior rangers coming back through programs aimed at middle school and high school interests, she said.

BELOW, COUNSELOR JULIA HIGBY-NAQUIN ENJOYS A MOMENT WITH CAMPERS. AT RIGHT, NEW JUNIOR RANGERS SAVOR THE LAST FEW MINUTES OF CAMP.



LAND PROGRAM MAKING PROGRESS

North Carolina state parks have been able to move forward on some critical land acquisitions over the past few months due to cooperation, partnerships and a better understanding by state leaders about acting when properties become available, according to David Knight, assistant secretary for natural resources in the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Knight outlined nine acquisitions totaling about 900 acres, including key additions at Gorges and South Mountains state parks and Mount Jefferson State Natural Area, approved by the Council of State over the winter.

“Land acquisitions had been stopped due to the economy and its impact on the state budget, but now we are making great progress,” Knight said at a meeting of the state’s Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Authority in March at Crowders Mountain State Park in Gaston County.

“This is great news and it is due to the outstanding work of the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund and our partners. Land is cheaper and now is the time to buy.”

Knight also described recent department initiatives related to climate change and sea level rise, which rank among the top priorities in the agency’s strategic plan. He described a new partnership involving DENR and the departments of Commerce, Transportation and Cultural Resources to address the issue in North Carolina.

“This issue will ultimately affect how state parks manage new lands and decisions will have to be made in how best to deal with climate change and to minimize our contribution to the major environmental problem,” he said.

In other business, Lewis Ledford, director of the Division of Parks and Recreation, outlined a series of issues and initiatives involving the state parks system, including status updates on sustainability efforts, construction projects and master plan development at Chimney Rock and Haw River state parks.

The new Fort Macon State Park Coastal Education and Visitor Center earned a gold rating in the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program of the U.S. Green Building Council, according to Ledford, who commended staff on their efforts and said state parks should exemplify responsible stewardship and sustainability.



LARRY HYDE, SUPERINTENDENT OF CROWDERS MOUNTAIN STATE PARK, LEADS TRUST FUND AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND FAMILIES ON A TOUR.

Recent visitor center construction is near completion at Cliffs of the Neuse and Raven Rock state parks, and new interim facilities are open at Mayo River State Park, Ledford said.

“The construction projects are extremely important in these communities,” he said. “We have determined that 30 jobs are created for each million dollars associated with a project.”

Darrell McBane, state trails coordinator, and Carol Tingley, the division’s deputy director, described the agency’s efforts on greenways, state trails, regional networks and the Mountains-to-Sea Trail.

Trails and greenways are popular for recreation and important for the conservation of stream buffers and wildlife corridors. The state trails program plays a major role in advocating and supporting trail and greenway projects across the state.

Larry Hyde, superintendent at Crowders Mountain State Park, gave a presentation on the park and also hosted a tour and hike for the board.

Crowders Mountain was a key player among North Carolina, South Carolina and the National Park Service in developing a trail linking the park with Kings Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina.

The superintendents of all three facilities joined authority members at the top of the park’s “Boulders Access” property before the meeting concluded.

MEGAN LYNCH CAPS 32-YEAR CAREER

Megan Lynch, one of the first female rangers in North Carolina's state parks system, retired as a superintendent at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area in March after 32 years with the Division of Parks and Recreation.

Lynch was a mentor to many rangers that followed, according to her supervisor, South District Superintendent Angelia Allcox, who told her, "Megan, as a female ranger, you've been a trailblazer and set an example for us."

Billy Totten, a retired district superintendent who worked alongside Lynch for years at the lake, said, "She challenged all of us to do our best and challenged all of us to think about what we were doing and why we were doing it."

A native of Boca Raton, Fla., Lynch earned a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation administration and natural resource management from North Carolina State University and worked as a seasonal ranger during college with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

She was hired as a park ranger by Superintendent Tommy Wagoner at Raven Rock State Park in 1977 and was promoted to chief ranger at Jordan Lake in 1982. She succeeded Wagoner as superintendent at Raven Rock in 1984 and later became a regional trails specialist.

In 1990, she was rehired at Jordan Lake as a superintendent. Each of the reservoir recreation areas has two superintendents.

Lynch was active in building the park's education programs and in initiatives to improve safety. And, she was involved in developing relations with the Hispanic community that visited the park.

Lynch said that being a park ranger was



LYNCH, LEFT, SHARES A MOMENT WITH ANGELIA ALLCOX, SOUTH DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT.

her dream job since she saw her first bald eagle's nest as a girl scout in central Florida.

She said she sometimes felt forgotten in the early days at remote parks. "We'd go for months when people seemed to forget those parks were out there," she said. "But we knew what we were doing and did it well."

Lewis Ledford, state parks director, said that Lynch's 20 years at Jordan Lake was the longest tenure at one of the busiest state park units with well over a million visitors annually. And, working with a succession of fellow superintendents, she faced "a lot of leadership styles and probably varied opinions on how to get things done."

"Megan, thank you genuinely for all that service," Ledford said.

'PARK' IT

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SPECIALTY LICENSE TAG



The Division of Motor Vehicles is accepting applications and payment for these special license plates. There is a \$30 fee in addition to regular license fees (\$60 for personalized plates). Additional fees support conservation through the Parks and Recreation and Natural Heritage trust funds.

**Information at www.ncparks.gov
or www.ncdot.org/dmv**

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT

MAY, 2010

NC STATE PARK	May 2010	TOTAL YTD May-10	May 2009	TOTAL YTD May-09	% CHANGE (2010/2009) May YTD	
Carolina Beach	32,376	170,354	54,350	192,578	-40%	-12%
Chimney Rock	17,928	50,998	16,205	52,249	11%	-2%
Cliffs of the Neuse	24,415	70,541	24,934	63,631	-2%	11%
Crowders Mountain	38,511	167,643	84,018	227,126	-54%	-26%
Dismal Swamp	8,114	23,649	6,304	19,862	29%	19%
Elk Knob	2,302	6,498	1,376	3,234	67%	101%
Eno River including Oconeechee Mountain	51,166	178,012	41,473	161,024	23%	11%
Falls Lake	114,907	309,008	135,294	375,937	-15%	-18%
Fort Fisher	96,879	238,865	74,406	191,689	30%	25%
Fort Macon	151,336	437,292	184,682	516,238	-18%	-15%
Goose Creek	31,956	110,518	20,906	83,484	53%	32%
Gorges	7,500	19,799	4,944	8,757	52%	126%
Hammocks Beach	9,250	24,842	15,912	42,966	-42%	-42%
Haw River	1,319	8,708	1,922	8,206	-31%	6%
Hanging Rock	58,248	149,530	36,402	131,772	60%	13%
Jones Lake	6,140	17,646	7,509	19,149	-18%	-8%
Jordan Lake	125,980	317,654	307,632	510,943	-59%	-38%
Jockey's Ridge	145,423	401,485	136,446	387,542	7%	4%
Kerr Lake	117,220	338,936	153,556	383,320	-24%	-12%
Lake James	49,917	95,848	55,849	144,817	-11%	-34%
Lake Norman	52,398	189,330	51,645	192,339	1%	-2%
Lake Waccamaw	11,898	36,328	11,086	36,906	7%	-2%
Lumber River	9,912	37,734	9,880	35,048	0%	8%
Mayo River	6,931	11,107	0	0	-100%	-100%
Merchants Millpond	27,476	103,404	23,128	91,244	19%	13%
Medoc Mountain	6,888	20,130	7,176	24,833	-4%	-19%
Mount Mitchell	33,343	51,858	30,629	51,400	9%	1%
Morrow Mountain	39,780	137,096	31,892	148,156	25%	-7%
New River including Mount Jefferson	30,862	77,202	28,332	78,152	9%	-1%
Pettigrew	9,468	28,935	6,748	27,063	40%	7%
Pilot Mountain	50,622	154,248	44,114	152,274	15%	1%
Raven Rock	15,786	66,485	16,902	76,282	-7%	-13%
Singletary Lake	2,313	8,334	1,588	5,652	46%	47%
South Mountains	22,150	84,686	20,752	75,254	7%	13%
Stone Mountain	49,308	144,024	42,928	143,656	15%	0%
Weymouth Woods	4,643	21,511	4,267	21,857	9%	-2%
William B. Umstead	75,356	361,529	62,319	270,409	21%	34%
STATEWIDE TOTAL	1,540,021	4,671,767	1,757,506	4,955,049	-12%	-6%



Our Mission Remains...

to protect North Carolina's **natural diversity**;

to provide and promote **outdoor recreation** opportunities throughout North Carolina;

to exemplify and encourage **good stewardship** of North Carolina's natural resources for all citizens and visitors.

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SAFETY ZONE

HOUSEKEEPING GOOD SAFETY TOOL

✓ Practice housekeeping at work; put tools, equipment and materials away promptly.

✓ Keep stairways and walkways clear of obstacles.

✓ Dispose of trash properly and promptly. Clean up or report spills immediately and use proper signs when necessary to warn visitors and other employees.

✓ In the office, close file drawers as soon as you're done with them or if you leave the area.

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